

Amendment to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0003] with the following amended paragraph:

[0003] This type of device is known, for example, from DE-PS [[498 953]] 498 943. There, a cartridge ejector, axially slidable in the barrel part of a drop-barrel weapon, is operated by an ejector hammer attached to rotate in the front part of the bascule. When the weapon is opened with the striking-pin piece already having been struck, rotation of the ejector hammer occurs by an ejector lever attached in the front shaft, which is acted upon by an ejector spring in the form of a leaf spring, also arranged in the front shaft and tightened during closure of the weapon. The ejector lever is rotated by the end of a cocking rod pushed by the striking-pin piece and, after reaching a certain position of rotation, is accelerated abruptly under the influence of the ejector spring, so that rapid rotation of the ejector hammer and displacement of the cartridge ejector to eject the spent cartridge is produced. If, however, the weapon is opened without the striking-pin piece having been struck, the ejection movement of the cartridge ejector only acts against an edge of the bascule by striking an extension of the ejector hammer. An unfired cartridge is withdrawn only slightly from the chamber for easier removal, whereas a fired cartridge is ejected. However, a relatively demanding operating mechanism in the front shaft is required in this type of cartridge ejector. Therefore, the manufacture of such drop-barrel weapons is costly and their assembly is also made difficult. Since the ejector springs are also already compressed during closure of the barrel part, they are generally under tension for a longer period, so that their service life, and therefore the function of the ejectors, may be adversely affected.